

# TAKOMA PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*December 24, 2023*

*Live streamed at 11:00 a.m.*



## 4TH SUNDAY OF *Advent*

Rev. Mark Harper, Pastor  
Takoma Park Presbyterian Church  
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**A Church for all People**

# THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

*(\*) Indicates those who are able, please stand.*

**+Facemasks are currently optional. If you have a vulnerable health condition or just prefer to wear a mask, please feel free to do so.**

*Health and Safety Committee.*

## Preparation for the Word

*"The Lord will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel (God is with us)."*

*-Isaiah 7:14b*

## WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

*Let the Prelude's music open you to God's presence as we begin worship.*

**Prelude      Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming**

*Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen*

*Arr. James T. Bingham*

**Welcome**

**Opening Prayer (Unison)**

**Benedict of Nursia (c.480-547)**

O Gracious and Holy God, give us diligence to seek you, wisdom to perceive you, and patience to wait for you. Grant us, O God, a mind to meditate on you; eyes to behold you; ears to listen for your word; a heart to love you; and a life to proclaim you; through the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Call to Worship:     Lighting the Candle of Love -  
Susan Muchemi and baby Nile.**

*Creator of the stars of night, your people's everlasting light,  
O Christ, Redeemer of us all, we pray you hear us when we call. (Sung by cantor)*

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and set lights in the sky – sun and moon and stars.

**By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.**

Today we light a fourth candle to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.

We name this candle Love.

We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of love. Even when despair is all around us and apathy seems the order of the day, we set our face steadily towards the light.

**Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of love this week, help us to become the signs of love that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven's love.**

Let us worship God!

**\*Opening Hymn 106     Prepare the Way, O Zion**

**Prayer of Confession**

On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, let us confess the sins that have kept us from glorifying and enjoying our God.

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray:

**Gracious God, we anticipate the birth of our newborn savior. Yet we struggle with the suffering and despair of our world. Our hearts grow hard with hopelessness.**

**What reason is there to rejoice?**

**We question your power and doubt our faith.**

**Emmanuel, help us resist the overwhelming forces that drag us down. Lift our spirits so we can experience your transcendent presence and incarnate grace.**

## **Assurance of Pardon**

The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

## **Alleluia! Thanks be to God!**

### **\*Praise 583                      Glory to God (x2)**

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest!

Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia!

### **\*Passing the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

*(Worshipers on Zoom may unmute themselves and share the peace.)*

## **WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD**

### **Prayer of Illumination 458**

*Thy word is a Lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. (2x)*

### **First Scripture Reading**

**Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26**

### **Anthem              I Wonder As I Wander**

Appalachian Carol  
Arr. John Jacob Niles

### **Time with the Children**

**Pastor Mark Harper**

### **Second Scripture Reading**

**Luke 1:26-38**

### **Reflection on the Word**

### **Sermon              When the Script Changes**

**Rev. Mark Harper**

### **\*Hymn 92              While We Are Waiting, Come**

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

### Prayers of the People

Rev. Mark Harper

*Prayers will be read from the Prayer Book, invited from the congregation and the zoom "Chat Box"*

**Prayer Response:** Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayers.**

### The Lord's Prayer (unison)

O Holy Trinity of Love,

Holy are you and holy is your name.

May your shalom come and your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.

Give us our daily bread,  
and forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Walk with us through times of trial and save us from evil.  
For the Beloved Community, the power, and the glory  
are yours now and forever. Amen.

### The Offering Invitation

*The offering plate reminds us of the many contributions we all make to our church and God's realm. Please pass it to your neighbor and offer thanks for each other's gifts.*

**Offertory In the Bleak Mid-Winter** Melody: Gustav Holst  
Arr. J.T Bingham

### \*Doxology 607

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ all people here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

### \*Prayer of Dedication (unison)

Gracious God, accept these gifts in grateful response for your generous gift of life-giving love. May these offerings bring joy to those most in need of Christ's mission and love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

# WE ARE SENT INTO THE WORLD

## Announcements of the Community's Life

\*Sending Hymn 110 Love Has Come

\*Charge and Benediction

Postlude Fanfare on: "From Heaven Above VOM HIMMEL HOCH  
To Earth I come" Arr. J. T Bingham

*Community worship ends; discipleship and service begin anew.*

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### *Participants in this morning's service*

Rev. Mark Harper, Pastor  
Donna Wieting, Liturgist  
Roger Griffis, baritone  
Dr. James Bingham, piano  
Jay Clouse, Zoom Technician  
Erol Kalayoglu, Zoom Technician

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Schedule for upcoming events

#### \*\* Zoom events

Tuesday, December 26, 12:00 p.m. Virtual coffee\*\*  
Sunday, December 31, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service (*hybrid*)

+Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, **you are welcome to our worship.** We are pleased you are with us today.

+Please continually pray for peace - - in our homes, in our lives, neighborhoods, the nation and the world.

+Monday night **choir rehearsals** are on a two-week hiatus and resume Monday, January 8, 2024 at 7:30.

+The **church office** will be closed next week.

+We need **volunteers to host coffee hour!** Hosting is easy and fun. Help support this important time of fellowship and sharing by signing up to host coffee hour - pick your Sunday and signup using this signup genius link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094BAFAD23A0FDC61-tppc>:

Questions contact **[rogergriffis61@gmail.com](mailto:rogergriffis61@gmail.com)** or 301-980-4694 Thank you!

**+2024 Stewardship Campaign:** Church family, we are getting close! Thanks for the 69 pledges out of our 90-pledge goal (77%) and \$297,802 out of our \$325,000 goal (92%)! If you haven't pledged yet, please fill out one of the pledge cards in the pews or *pledge online at the [TPPC pledge webpage - https://www.takomaparkpc.org/tppconlinepledge](https://www.takomaparkpc.org/tppconlinepledge)*. **All pledges are valued and needed, no matter the size.** Thanks!

*Christmas Poinsettias decorating the Sanctuary.*

**Dedicated in Memory of:**

**Jim & Joan McGilvray**

*by Laurie McGilvray*

**Carmen Hague**

*By Laurie McGilvray*

**Richard & Anne Griffis**

*by Roger Griffis*

**Wallace Monsell and Albert K. Monsell, Jr**

*by Brian and Rose Monsell*

**Joan and Al Lange, Andrew & Will Lange &**

**Mary and Ron Gagnon**

*by Karen Lange*

**Gail Oakes**

*By Carol Christensen*

**Gil & Gloria Cardillo**

*by Stacy Cardillo*

**My Mother Anne**

*by Laurie Kelly*

**Dedicated in Honor of:**

**Bob & Lenore Christensen**

**George & Kathy Connor**

*by Carol Christensen*

**Sabrina Tyson - Nursery Staff**

**Miladi Cruz - Nursery Staff**

*By Jo Hoge*